AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for supplying a flowable medium to a tobacco rod of a smoking product (2), comprising the steps of:
forming a cigarette rod on a cigarette machine a cigarette machine[[,]]; and
introducing said flowable medium to said tobacco rod on a drum (1) of said cigarette machine, said flowable medium being introduced into the rod of the smoking product by a hollow mandrel (16) provided with screw-like outer grooves, by inserting the hollow mandrel (16) into a front end and discharging the medium from the hollow mandrel while withdrawing it from the rod, said hollow mandrel exhibiting auto-rotation in opposite directions upon insertion and upon extraction from said rod.

2. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the flowable medium is introduced as a material selected from the group of: liquid, pasty, powdery, filiform or gaseous medium.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim [[3]] 1, wherein the hollow mandrel (16) is moved at a uniform speed with respect to the rod when introducing the medium, allowing distribution of the medium over the rod.

5. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the medium is introduced on the drum (1) of a filter assembler of a cigarette machine.

6. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim [[3]] 1, wherein the hollow mandrel (16) is held on a carrier drum (5) rotating synchronously with the drum (1).

7. (Canceled)

8. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 6 wherein the flowable medium is supplied to the hollow mandrel (16) by the rotational centrifugal forces of the rotating carrier drum (5).

9. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 6 wherein the flowable medium is supplied to the hollow mandrel (16) by a pump.

10. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 8 wherein the flow of the medium is regulated by a valve.

11. (Currently Amended) A method for supplying a flowable medium to a tobacco rod of a smoking product, comprising the steps of:
forming said tobacco rod on a drum of a cigarette machine;
inserting a rotatable hollow mandrel provided with screw-like outer grooves into an end of said tobacco rod; and
injecting said flowable medium from said hollow mandrel into said tobacco rod as said hollow mandrel passes through said tobacco rod.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 11, wherein said flowable medium is introduced on said drum of said cigarette machine by inserting said hollow mandrel into a lit end of said tobacco rod, thrusting said hollow mandrel through said tobacco rod to a filter end of said tobacco rod, and injecting said flowable medium from said hollow mandrel.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 12, including injecting said flowable medium from said hollow mandrel while withdrawing said hollow mandrel from said tobacco rod.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) A method for supplying a flowable medium to a tobacco rod of a smoking product, comprising the steps of:
forming said tobacco rod; and
introducing said flowable medium into said tobacco rod on a drum of a cigarette machine by inserting a hollow mandrel into an end of said tobacco rod and injecting said flowable medium from said hollow mandrel while withdrawing said hollow mandrel from said tobacco rod, wherein said hollow mandrel is provided with spiraled outer grooves providing an auto-rotation in opposing directions when said hollow mandrel is inserted into said tobacco rod and withdrawn from said tobacco rod.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 15, wherein said medium is introduced as a material selected from the group of liquid, paste, powder, filiform, or gaseous medium.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 15, wherein said medium is introduced on said drum of a filter assembler of said cigarette machine.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 15, wherein said medium is introduced into said tobacco rod by inserting said hollow mandrel into a front end of said tobacco rod, said front end opposing a filter end[[,]] ~~and discharging said medium from said hollow mandrel while withdrawing said hollow mandrel from said tobacco rod~~.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 18, wherein said hollow mandrel is moved at a uniform speed with respect to said tobacco rod during withdrawal of said hollow mandrel when introducing said medium, allowing uniform distribution of said medium over said tobacco rod.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 18, wherein said hollow mandrel is held on a rotating carrier drum rotating synchronously with said drum.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 21, wherein said medium is supplied to said hollow mandrel by a pump.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 21, wherein said medium is supplied to said hollow mandrel by rotational centrifugal forces of said rotating carrier drum.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 23, wherein said medium flow is regulated by a valve.

25. (Currently Amended) A method for introducing a flowable medium to a formed tobacco rod of a smoking product on a drum of a cigarette machine, comprising the steps of:
inserting a rotatable hollow mandrel provided with spiraled outer grooves into a lit end of said formed tobacco rod;
driving said hollow mandrel to an opposing filter end of said formed tobacco rod; and
injecting said flowable medium from said hollow mandrel, while said hollow mandrel passes at a uniform speed through said formed tobacco rod, allowing uniform distribution of said flowable medium over said formed tobacco rod, said hollow mandrel being inserted into said formed tobacco rod and extracted from said formed tobacco rod with auto-rotation in opposite directions for insertion and extraction.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 25, wherein said flowable medium is selected from the group of: liquid, pasty, powdery, filiform, or gaseous medium.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 25, wherein said flowable medium is introduced on said drum of a filter assembler of said cigarette machine.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 25, wherein said flowable medium is injected into said formed tobacco rod of said smoking product while said hollow mandrel is withdrawn ~~at a uniform speed from said formed tobacco rod, allowing uniform distribution of said flowable medium over said formed tobacco rod~~.

29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[28]] 1, wherein said hollow mandrel is held on a carrier drum rotating synchronously with said drum.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 30, wherein said flowable medium is supplied to said hollow mandrel by rotational centrifugal forces of said carrier drum and said medium flow is regulated by a valve.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 30, wherein said flowable medium is supplied to said hollow mandrel by a pump.

33. (Currently Amended) A method for supplying a flowable medium to a formed tobacco rod of a smoking product, comprising the steps of:
introducing said flowable medium by inserting a rotatable hollow mandrel provided with spiraled outer grooves into a lit end of said formed tobacco rod while said formed tobacco rod is positioned on a drum of a cigarette machine;
driving said hollow mandrel to an opposing filter end of said formed tobacco rod; and
injecting said flowable medium while withdrawing said hollow mandrel from said formed tobacco rod, said hollow mandrel being inserted into and extracted from said formed tobacco rod with auto-rotation in opposite directions for insertion and extraction.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 33, wherein said medium is selected from the group of: liquid, pasty, powdery, filiform, or gaseous medium.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 33, wherein said hollow mandrel is inserted and extracted at a consistent speed for even distribution of said flowable medium over said formed tobacco rod.

36. (Canceled)

37. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 33, wherein said flowable medium is introduced on a drum of a filter assembler of said cigarette machine.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 37, wherein said hollow mandrel is held on a rotating carrier drum rotating synchronously with said drum.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 38, wherein said flowable medium is supplied to said hollow mandrel by a pump.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 38, wherein said flowable medium is supplied to said hollow mandrel by rotational centrifugal forces of said rotating carrier drum.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 40, wherein said medium flow is regulated by a valve.